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5. — *Les Secrets d'État dans le Gouvernement Constitutionnel.* Par le Général ALPHONSE LA MARMORA. Paris: Libraire Militaire de J. Dumaine. 1877. pp. 156.

WHILE General La Marmora's latest publication is principally a defence of his own political conduct and previous publications, it is interesting as throwing light upon the relations which now exist between Italy and Germany, and as affording us a glimpse into the negotiations in 1866, which have doubtless contributed to produce those relations. The high positions which General La Marmora has occupied in the service of his country, having filled the functions of Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, President of the Council, Commander-in-Chief of the Army, and Administrator of the Kingdom of Naples shortly after its annexation, invest any revelations he may have to make with a peculiar weight and importance. The object of his present brochure is not, however, so much to divulge new secrets as to defend himself for revealing those which caused so much sensation on the occasion of his former work, "un peu plus de lumière"; the statements in which, relative to the negotiations which had taken place between Italy and Prussia at the time of the Prusso-Austrian war, Prince Bismarck stigmatized in the German Chamber as "an impudently false invention," and with characteristic arrogance demanded from the Italian government that they should pass a law rendering any such publication of political documents in future penal. This law was passed; it was a direct insult to General La Marmora, and he now revenges himself on the Minister who passed it at the dictation of the German Chancellor, and on that potent personage himself, by reiterating the assertions to which he took umbrage, and throwing back upon him the charge of falsehood. As between Prince Bismarck and General La Marmora, our experience of the two men would lead us to give the benefit of the doubt as to who is telling the truth to the Italian. Unfortunately his adversary is too powerful even for truth to prevail against him. The publication by Count Arnim of despatches which were undoubtedly genuine, and which did not represent the German Chancellor as a model of truthful diplomacy, did not save him from destruction, and now General La Marmora thinks that if he can prove his case, he has won it. The misfortune in these disputes is that the truth can only be known through a breach of political confidence. It is true that General La Marmora was basely maligned; the worst treachery towards Prussia, of which he was undoubtedly innocent, was ascribed to him by the Prussian government organs, because it suited the German Chancellor to ignore the assistance

which Italy had rendered to Prussia in her struggle with Austria, and La Marmora was finally goaded to retaliate and to defend himself, which he could only do by the revelation of state secrets, which did not reflect very much credit upon any of the parties concerned. For this he was generally blamed at the time, and we doubt very much whether he has made his own case better by this last publication. It can certainly not be gratifying to his countrymen, as it proves how completely Bismarck has got his heel upon them; nor can it be pleasing to the German Chancellor, as it gives us some idea of the means usually employed by that eminent statesman whenever he wishes to weave the toils of his diplomacy round a foreign government. The fetters which were flung round Italy in 1866, and against which General La Marmora so bitterly inveighs, are drawn even tighter now, for Italy has no longer France to appeal to, and is in the inexorable gripe of Prussia. She is held in a leash by the German Chancellor, and will be slipped upon Turkey the day that Austria declares war against Russia, and in self-defence finds herself driven to an alliance with the Porte. Perhaps the very campaign which Prussia dictated to Italy in 1866, and his refusal to adopt which is the cause of La Marmora's present quarrel with Bismarck, will be forced upon some more pliable general, when Italy is ordered by the German government to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them in the present European complication by taking up arms against Austria.

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6. — *Across Central America.* By J. W. BODDAM WHETHAM. London: Hurst and Blackett. 1877. pp. 353.

"IF," says Mr. Boddam Whetham in the preface to his book, "my readers only know as little of the subjects of this volume before taking it up as I did before I started on my journey, I trust they will be in some measure repaid by its perusal." The fault we have to find with the author is that he should have limited his literary effort to a desire to satisfy that portion of the public who were as ignorant of Central America as he was himself before he started on his tour across it. Had his ambition been higher, his book would have been better worth reading. As it is, we thankfully accept it as a slight though distinct addition to our knowledge of a very little known region, which our author had great opportunities of rendering far more satisfactory and complete. Assuming that our readers have read Stephens and Morelet, and that their ignorance of Guatemala is not so profound as Mr. Boddam Whetham's seems to have been, they will appreciate the value of his exploration when we tell them that he travelled from Coban to Peten by a